

**Kessler, Ellen**

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**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 3:04 PM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: CapX2020 Project  
**Attachments:** Microsoft Word - stephanie strength capx2020doc.pdf; ATT00001.txt

-----Original Message-----

From: horsefly@integra.net [mailto:horsefly@integra.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2009 3:05 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CapX2020 Project

Dear Ms. Strength,  
I am strongly opposed to the CapX2020 project, and have attached a letter documenting some of my concerns, and specifically the use of 50th Street as an alternative route for the project.  
I want to be sure to note that I feel that both 50th Street and 57th Street in Webster, MN (Rice County) are unsuitable for identical reasons, with 50th Street slightly more so, due to the even closer proximity to the Sky Harbor Airpark.  
Again, thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to call or email with any questions or comments.  
Sincerely,  
Anastasia Balfany  
3720 50th Street West  
Webster, MN 55088  
952-652-2786

**I-112-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

July 7, 2009

To: Ms. Stephanie Strength

Re: CAPX2020 Project and Webster Township/Rice County MN

Dear Ms. Strength,

It was with very great concern and that we learned of the proposal regarding the use of **50th Street in Webster, MN** in Rice County as a new proposed alternate route for the CAPX 2020 Brookings to Hampton project. Ironically, my husband and I both spoke out vehemently against the project, including the 57<sup>th</sup> Street alternative, only to find that an additional route option is now literally our front yard. An alternative that is truly flawed, as the reasoning for this route is "to avoid homes along 57<sup>th</sup> Street", which gives no value or importance to the many homes and families on 50<sup>th</sup> Street! Certainly the concerns and comments that I raised in my previous letters apply to this location, as well.

The voting public spoke out strongly in regard to securing and protecting open spaces for future generations, and adopted the Scott and Rice County comprehensive plan with these tenants just a few years ago. Routing through rural and open spaces is contrary to that goal, and although it may offer less resistance due to a much lower population, all citizens will feel the repercussions and loss, whether rural or suburban. We pride ourselves on living in an area that is rich in natural beauty and a true haven for wildlife and outdoor enthusiasts. Our neighbors, as well as ourselves, have worked hard with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to establish secure wildlife habitat and wetlands – at significant personal expense and effort, with the understanding that the diverse ecosystems and natural resources are an important investment for all current and future residents of Webster Township and beyond, and to cut through this area with transmission lines is horrific and most definitely unwelcome. Our neighbors include retirees living on century farms, equestrian businesses and hobbyist, working farmers, teachers, doctors, and many children. The thought of allowing the intrusion and subsequent, documented risks associated with high voltage power line in this setting is unacceptable on many, many levels.

In addition to the loss of natural habitat and quality of life, I am also very vehemently opposed to line, as it will have a devastating effect on landowner property values. No "average easement" payment can make up for the personal and financial loss to homeowners, farmers and residents. Many of whom have lived on their homesteads for generations. We personally have invested over \$500,000 in renovations to our historic home, and there is no doubt that if the power lines are allowed on 50<sup>th</sup> Street (or 57<sup>th</sup> Street), we will most certainly face catastrophic devaluation.

All of this, coupled with the very close proximity of the Sky Harbor Airpark (located only ½ mile south of 50<sup>th</sup> Street West!), and the frequent presence of low flying small aircraft, homebuilt aircraft, hot air balloons and

helicopters, makes the site especially unsuitable and completely unsafe. (To personally note, just this past week a hot air balloon was blown off-course and almost landed in the treetops along 50<sup>th</sup> Street and Canby.)

I sincerely hope that you will eliminate the option of 50<sup>th</sup> Street in Webster and focus the lines in more suitable areas - preferably underground, near existing high capacity power lines and/or along major corridors – like interstate highways.

I also sincerely hope that you will pay very close attention to the strong voices that argue that the lines are not even needed, and that the impact on health and the environment are much more substantial and valuable than previously granted.

With Respect,

Michael and Anastasia Balfany  
3720 50th Street West  
Webster, MN 55088  
952-652-2786